

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

Domestic Abuse Policy

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Approved by: [RAISE-AP Educational Directors](#)

Approval Signatures

*RAISE-AP
Directors*

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Introduction

This policy is to [RAISE-AP](#) work towards a safer community. [RAISE-AP](#) has a responsibility to respond to the safety and welfare of children we are working with and a duty to recognise that their employees may also be affected by domestic abuse.

This Policy is also a point of reference for all employees who are involved in reports of domestic abuse in a work capacity. Employees can refer to this Policy for guidance purposes.

Aims and Objectives

To send out a strong message that domestic abuse will not be tolerated and that [RAISE-AP](#) will promote healthy and respectful relationships.

- To develop an effective and supportive response for all those affected by domestic abuse.
- To optimise the opportunity for disclosure of domestic abuse in a safe environment.
- To offer practical suggestions of further support available.
- To offer the Head of Provision guidance on how to support employees affected by domestic abuse

Definition

The Home Office 2021 definition of domestic violence and abuse now states:

Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and the behaviour is abusive.*

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- a) physical or sexual abuse
- b) violent or threatening behaviour
- c) controlling or coercive behaviour
- d) economic abuse
- e) psychological, emotional or other abuse

It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

*Personally connected: They are, or have been, married; civil partners; have agreed to marry one another; have entered into a civil partnership agreement; are or have been in an intimate personal relationship; they have or have had a parental relationship in relation to the same child; or are relatives.

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

If staff identify children for whom Domestic Abuse may be a concern, they will apply the usual referral process and Child Protection procedures and pass this information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Where domestic abuse notifications are received from the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), this information will be added to a child's chronology and child protection record to ensure that appropriate support can be provided where necessary. A coding system will be in place.

Raising Domestic Abuse Concerns

The member of staff who has the best working relationship with the parent/carer or member of staff should be the one who asks the questions about their concerns.

This should occur in a safe and suitable environment, where the abuser or another inappropriate person is not expected to interrupt or overhear and respect given to that person's privacy and dignity. These conversations should never happen in the presence of the abusive partner, any children involved OR any family member unless the individual states that it is safe to do so while the family member is not with them.

Response Following Disclosure / Concern

When responding to domestic abuse employees are expected to adhere to the Referral Pathway in the Domestic Abuse Protocol for Schools and Educational Settings. In those circumstances where the victim is under 18 years and the perpetrator is 18 years or above, or if both victim and perpetrator are under 18 years this should also be treated as a child safeguarding concern.

A referral/signposting can also be made to specialist domestic abuse services if aged 16/17 years. In the event that a child is known to be involved in a violent relationship, the member of staff should consider undertaking an Early Help Assessment. Should

they subsequently decide they would like a consultation with an Early Help Advisor regarding their next steps this should be arranged. During the course of any such discussions the member of staff may find it helpful to consider with the Early Help Advisor whether the matter meets the threshold for social care intervention.

If the member of staff believes the child is at immediate risk then they should contact the police and initiate child protection procedures.

Professional Curiosity

The Domestic Abuse Protocol stresses the importance of professional curiosity. Employees must demonstrate a non-discriminatory approach and explore the issues and formulate judgements that translate into effective actions in their dealings with children, adults and families. This should be matched by an organisational culture which supports its employees in openness, constructive challenge and confidence to practice sensitive and challenging circumstances at the front line.

It is vital that employees understand the complexity of domestic abuse and are curious about what is happening in the child, adult and perpetrators life. Professional curiosity is the capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a family rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value.

Employees should never avoid asking the difficult questions, sharing concerns with your Designated Safeguarding Lead [DSL] as a "fresh pair of eyes" looking at a case can really help to maintain good practice standards and develop a critical mind-set.

Inform the individual who has disclosed to you or of whom you have concerns for of the local support services in your area, so they can contact them either with you or directly at their convenience.

Support to staff who may be affected by domestic abuse could be offered additional leave for appointments with solicitors or doctors or support services for example, **RAISE-AP** should be as flexible as possible to be able to accommodate the employee's requests.

Extra security could be offered for example if the employee is being stalked or harassed, you could offer a different parking space and way of entering the workplace, start or finish time to enable a change in work pattern. No mention of that employee's name or picture in publicity at the setting, all of which reduce the risk to that individual while at work.

Recording

Information recorded on any individual either studying or working at RAISE-AP should be stored in a safe manner, so not to heighten the risk to that individual, i.e. the abusive partner/family member may see the note and increase the abuse.

Staff Safety and Wellbeing

Employees are potentially at risk whenever they work with a family where one or more family members are violent. Employees should be aware that domestic abuse is present but undisclosed or not known in many of the families they work with.

RAISE-AP should ensure that employees have the appropriate training and skills for working with people experiencing Domestic Abuse; and use supervision sessions both to allow employees to voice fears about abuse in a family being directed at them; and to check that safe practice is being followed in all cases where Domestic Abuse is known or suspected.

Employees and managers should also be aware of the emotional impact of working with victims and/or perpetrators of domestic abuse and information and procedures for reducing risk of vicarious trauma.

Training

RAISE-AP employees are advised to complete domestic abuse training yearly.

Recourse

There may be occasions where victims, children of victims, or carers may have an uncertain immigration status, which could prevent them from accessing services. The victim may be hesitant to take action against the perpetrator for fear of losing the right to remain in the UK.

In some cases, victims have received threats of deportation from their partner or extended family if they report domestic abuse and have had their passports taken from them. Similarly, children may have had their passports taken away from them and may fear that they and/or their parent could be deported if they disclose domestic abuse in the family. This introduces an additional level of complexity and vulnerability and employees should be aware of this and ask the specific question if they think it is a potential issue.

This policy cannot prescribe specific actions in respect of this emerging and complex environment. However, employees should be aware that these issues create a complex challenge within safeguarding and can create an environment in which Child Sexual Exploitation, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking might prosper.

We have a duty under numerous pieces of legislation to recognise threat, risk and harm and to take steps to safeguard. All employees should feel comfortable to intervene and make good professional decisions and escalate to the DSL for appropriate levels of decision making.

Key Contacts and Resources

24-hour national Domestic Abuse Helpline

www.womensaid.org.uk

0808 2000 247

Shelter

www.shelter.org.uk

0808 800 4444

Forced Marriage Unit

www.foc.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

020 7008 0151 9am to 5pm Mon – Fri

Samaritans

www.samaritans.org.uk

08457 90 90 90

Men's Advice Line

www.mensadviceline.org.uk

0808 801 0327

Victim Support

www.victimsupport.org.uk

0300 3031947

Mankind

www.mankind.org.uk

01823 334244

Network for Surviving Stalking

www.nss.org.uk

Galop

Support helpline for LGBT victims of domestic abuse

www.galop.org.uk

0300 999 5428

Information for children and young people:

www.thehideout.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.disrespectnobody.co.uk

www.kooth.com

Keeping Children Safe in Education; Statutory guidance for schools and colleges.

Raise Values

Our **RAISE-AP values** (Resolve, Attitude, Invest, Social Skills and Education) are key in everything we do, specifically with attitudes (modelling and expectations), invest (tailoring setup for our young people) social skills (becoming part of a community) which are linked to our Domestic Abuse policy.
